Disability Related Expenditure

***Is Life more expensive because of your disability or Illness?***

***You could be entitled to a reduction in your care charges.***

**1. What is Disability Related Expenditure?**

Disability Related Expenditure, or ‘DRE’ are extra expense you face because of your disability or illness. These can be anything from heating to clothing, specialist food to basic domestic or gardening services. This should be clearly recorded in your Care and Support Plan.

If you have a disability benefit and pay towards your care, the amount you pay may be reduced to make allowance for these extra expenses, if these conditions are met:

* you have some evidence that you buy the items or services regularly,
* they are reasonable expenses given your level of need
* they are not provided to you in another way (for example through your mobility benefits, your Personal Budget or a charitable grant).
* The cost is reasonable for the type of expense.

Any reduction in your care charges will depend on the expenses you tell us about. It’s important that you tell us about everything. Below is some guidance about what can be claimed as Disability Related Expenditure and how to make sure your expenses are taken into account.

**2. Do I qualify for DRE?**

To qualify to have your contribution reduced because of your extra disability expenses, you must:

* Be using Social care services which are chargeable under the Royal Borough of Greenwich Charging Policy.
* Be in receipt of disability benefits, for example Attendance Allowance,

Disability Living Allowance (Care Component) or Personal Independence Payment (Daily living Component)

**3. Flat Rate:**

When working out how much you can afford to pay in your Financial Assessment, we will make a standard allowance of £15.30 per week for everyone who receives disability benefits. This means that you only need to claim disability related expenditure and provide evidence if you believe you have disability-related costs of more than £15.30 per week.

**4.** **What sort of thing can I claim for?**

Please see the **end of the document for a longer list of Disability Related Expenses**. Here are the main categories of things you may claim for.

* **Specialist items and services:** you may use things that are made specially to help with your disability, such as wheelchairs which may have additional costs, like repair and insurance.
* **Increased use of non-specialised items and services:** you may have to use things more because of your disability such as transport and heating.
* **Higher cost non-specialist items and services:** you may have to use things that cost more than average such as paying for domestic support or home delivery of shopping.

**5. How do I apply for Disability Related expenditure to be taken off my contribution?**

If you think your disability related expenses are no more than £15.30 per week if you receive the higher rate or £10.00 per week if on middle or lower rate, there is nothing you need to do.

The financial assessment team can you send you a DRE claim form that you can complete and return with your evidence that is required, or the officer can visit you to complete and view your evidence.

If you do not receive a qualifying benefit the financially assessment officer can assist you in completing the form for the DWP, who will decide if you are entitled to receive the appropriate benefit, if received you can then apply for a DRE assessment.

**6. How do I work out what my Disability Related Expenses are?**

It can be difficult to think about DRE. Your life is what you experience every day and you are probably not used to considering what additional costs you incur each month due to your disability.

Think about your day-to-day life and what items and services you use. Try to think about what differences there are between what you have to spend compared to a relative, friend or neighbour who does not have a disability or long-term health condition.

You may use some items and services more at certain times than others. It may help to look through records you have about your disability and any invoices/ bills receipts to see what you spend in a week/month/year and which costs arise from your disability. It may be easier to think about the extra costs you spend over a whole year.

**7. What evidence will I need to provide?**

 The council will process all reasonable costs without you having to provide evidence.

The council will ask for evidence of any particularly high or unusual DRE.

**Evidence could be;**

• Proof of the expenses such as bills/ invoices/receipts, contracts and bank statements, along with an explanation of why an expense is because of your disability.

• Your Care and Support Plan, (co-produced with your social worker), can highlight disabilities or medical conditions which give rise to your DRE.

If you do not have evidence, you can still apply. You then have 3 months to gather and submit your evidence. During this period, any care charges you have been asked to pay must continue to be paid.

If you incur costs for your carer or supporter this can be included in your DRE. The below list includes examples of the sort of expenditure that could be claimed, what is considered a reasonable cost (anything below this does not require evidence), as well as where actual costs will be considered which will require evidence.

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| **DRE**  | **Details**  | **Tips and Evidence Required** |
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| --- | --- | --- |
| Community alarm  |  |   |

 | Community alarm service, warden-call system, Telecare or similar | Actual Cost with Contract / Bills from Provider |
| Clothing/ shoes/ bedding  | Specially made or the costs of getting clothes adapted (e.g. having buttons replaced with Velcro). Replacement of clothing /shoes (including carers’ clothing) due to damage caused by behaviour.  | Need identified in the Care and Support Plan Receipts |
| Heating  | Do you feel the cold and need the temperature set higher? Do you need the heating on constantly at night? Do you spend more time at home because of disability and use more power? Does your carer need to be awake at night?  | Receipts /Annual statementStandard amounts ignored any costs of these amounts are allowed:Single person – Flat/Terrace £2761.73 Couple – Flat/Terrace £3643.68 Single Person - Semi Detached £2933.32 Couple – Semi Detached £3872.45 Single – Detached £3568.76 Couples – Detached £4704.40 |
| **DRE**  | **Details**  | **Tips and Evidence Required** |
| Gardening or housework  | Additional costs related to your disability, such as adaptions or equipment.  | Evidence required  |
| Private Care – Extra Care,  | Any additional support to meet your needs that you pay for (not funded by the Council)* Cleaning/Domestic tasks
* private therapies such as counselling, chiropody, physiotherapy.
* sensory pool or room, reflexology, massage, music therapy, natural remedies, therapeutic activities and breaks).
 | Need identified in the Care and Support Plan Receipts for three months  |
| Transport and travel (after Mobility Allowance Exhausted)  | Use of taxis if unable to use public transport or taxi card service. Transport to health appointments. If you have Personal Assistant/ Carer and you need to pay for their travel costs to go with you these can also be calculated and included. If you receive the mobility component of DLA or PIP, the transport costs you include must be the amount you need to pay more than the mobility benefit  | Receipts if not covered on your care and support plan. |
| **DRE**  | **Details**  | **Tips and Evidence Required**  |
| Specialist washing powder or laundry  | Do you spend extra on washing clothes or bed linen or dry cleaning? This may be because of incontinence problems or because you need to change your clothes more often due to your disability. You may need frequent cleaning of furniture and carpets, and protective treatments to minimise damage or staining, due to disability.  | Care and support plan may identify a need. If not evidence from other sources and consideration of the nature and impact of any health problem or disability may provide a guide. Identify more than 4 loads per week  |
| Wheelchair  | Wheel chair purchased if not provided free of charge | Evidence of purchase.   |
| Powered bed  | purchased if not provided free of charge | Evidence of purchase if available Cost divided by 500 (10 yr life) up to a maximum of £5.25 per week |
| Powered reclining chair  | purchased if not provided free of charge | Evidence of purchase if available cost divided by 500 up to a maximum of £4.16 per week |
| Stair-lift  | purchased if not provided free of charge | Evidence of purchase without DFG (disabled facility grant) input Cost divided by 500 up to a maximum of £7.42 per week |
| **DRE**  | **Details**  | **Tips and Evidence Required** |
| Hoist  | purchased if not provided free of charge | Evidence of purchase without DFG (disabled facility grant) input cost divided by 500 up to a maximum of £3.64 per week |
| Chemist items / Prescriptions  | If you pay for your prescriptions for medication and other chemist items which are needed due to your disability. This may include: Pads/Panty liners, Continence Pads Gloves (latex for personal care – not provided by support), Additional Wet wipes, Additional toilet paper Disposable aprons, Specialist creams Bandages / plasters / dressings  | Need identified in the Care and Support Plan Prescription card £111.60 per yearReceipts for three months  |
| Special Diet & Food  | Special dietary needs that means food is more expensive than normal food purchases due to your illness or disability. You may have allergies to certain foods or ingredients, which make meals more expensive  | GP letter Receipts for the additional cost. Need identified in Support Plan  |
| Internet Access and telephone  | You may be unable to leave your home or have sensory or mental issues which mean that you, or your carer, have to manage your affairs by a computer. If you share your home with others the costs should be shared and only the share for the person claiming should be included as DRE.  | Evidence of how shared and eligible need. Reasonable amounts. |

**Everyone’s costs will be different, and a list of examples cannot contain everything. If you have a Disability Related Expenditure that is not listed, you should still include it.** Not all costs will be considered eligible. For instance, if you choose to buy items / services when there is a cheaper alternative that meets your needs, or if it is something that could be provided by the NHS for free. If you are unsure whether a cost counts as Disability Related Expenditure or not, include it on the form anyway.

**Regular expenses**

We will ask for evidence of your regular expenses to see how much you spend and how often. This will allow us to work out your average weekly expense.

For example, Elsie cannot clean her flat and this is not covered in her care plan. Elsie spends £12 per week for a cleaner to help her. Elsie has provided the receipts for the last 4 weeks showing her expenditure. We have awarded £12 of DRE per week.

**One-off expenses**

Larger, one-off expenses are usually for equipment or adaptions, such as wheelchairs or hoists.

Always do your research and check with your social worker if the equipment you need can be provided or funded. We will consider this and any cheaper alternatives available on the market. We cannot consider DRE for equipment purchased using grants or funded by the NHS.

For example, Rahul spent £3,000 for a powered wheelchair. We have found that a similar wheelchair costs £2,500, so we can only consider £2,500. We have divided £2,500 by 500 (10 years life expectancy of the wheelchair) and arrived at £5 DRE per week.